

UNIFIED ARIZONA VETERANS – SEPTEMBER 6, 2008

Call to Order: The regular business meeting of the Unified Arizona Veterans was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chair Melvin Brody with proper ceremonies. The roll was called and a quorum was established. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as written by a motion from George Cushing, seconded by Dave Willis, and carried.

Communications and Correspondence: None.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Donna Adams presented income and expense data, and ending balance. Motion by Donna, seconded by Linda Fulkerson, to accept the Treasurer's Report subject to audit. Donna reminded members that dues are due. Donna read a list of those organizations whose dues are current.

Sickness and Distress: Chaplain Bohach

Phyllis Althoff, wife of David Althoff, passed on August 9, 2008. Condolences have been sent to the family. David is Class of 2005, Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame.

Guest Speaker – Susan Marcell, Volunteer for Arizona Homeless Veterans Standown, provided information about the 52nd Annual Cliff Garrett Memorial Rodeo, November 1 & 2nd, Gilbert Rodeo Park, 777 S. Val Vista Drive, Gilbert, AZ, Adults: \$8.00 donation, Children 6-12: \$5.00 donation. This is a Honeywell Employee Charity event, with net proceeds to Arizona Homeless Veterans Standown. The next Homeless Veterans Standown will likely be in February 2009.

REPORTS

1. UAV Board of Directors meeting held 9/6/08

Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2008 Induction Ceremony on Oct. 24 – Notification letters will be issued to selectees on 9/8/08. Also, it makes sense to move the Nomination deadline for the Class of 2009 and future Classes, to move the Nomination due date to April 30th, vice May 31st.

2. AZDVS – Dave Hampton, Public Affairs Officer, reported that:

On 8/28/08, the Chinle Benefits Office opened, making 23 total benefits offices in AZ. There are 43 counselors now, with two more anticipated by the end of 2008. Goal is: a benefits office within one hour's drive from any veteran's home.

Congress returns on Monday, September 8th for 3 weeks. Adjournment will be end of September. Still pending are: the Defense Authorization bill, the 2009 VA Appropriations bill, a Continuing Resolution to enable federal agencies to keep operating while their budget approvals are delayed, and a COLA that may be 2.6%.

Effective 9/2/08, there is a new AZDVS Deputy Director, Bob Barnes, formerly Louisiana State Dept of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Barnes is USAF Retired and served as Crew Chief, Air Force ONE.

Dave Hampton was asked to explain the Cavalry Soldier Relocation Project. The remains of 70 U.S. Army cavalry soldiers from the 1862-1880 period of U.S. military history are being moved to the Southern AZ Memorial site. The VFW Riders/2nd Annual POW-MIA Remembrance Run (motorcycles) is scheduled for September 27th, 10:00 a.m., at the Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Sierra Vista, CA. Suggested donation: \$10 per person, \$15 with passenger. Poker Run prize: High Hand, Low Hand, and Instant Win Card donation. Proceeds to benefit the National Home for Widows and Orphans, and the Cavalry Soldier Relocation Project.

3. UAV Legislative Committee – Bob Delker

The Copper Shield Award is a new award to recognize an Arizona legislator who has demonstrated outstanding support to Arizona veterans and their families. Bob reported plans to purchase a copper sheet large enough to cut 6 copper shield awards. The estimated cost for the first year (2008) will be \$750, the second to sixth year will be \$250 each year. Motion made by George Cushing, seconded by Carol Hamburger.

There was discussion as to how to select the Copper Shield Award recipient. Some favored “one organization, one vote.” Acting Chair Brody supported evaluation and selection by a committee. Motion to table for the October 4th UAV Meeting made by Jesse Gersten, seconded by George Cushing, motion carried.

4. VA Medical Center - Rex Patterson reported that the MRI machine is up and running. There is also a Brain Boosters program for TBI/Traumatic Brain Injury patients. A satellite office is planned at I-17 and Thunderbird Road – implementation date is unknown.

UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS

A. UAV Community Project Publicity for November 2008 – This was a proposal suggested in May to publicize in October veterans organizations' community service projects

scheduled in November. Only two veterans organizations have events scheduled for November. Carol Culbertson, originator of the proposal, recommended cancellation.

B. UAV Wreath: Judy Hatch presented the UAV Wreath she has made which will be used at future ceremonies, and at a cost of \$22.49. The wreath is beautiful, Judy!

C. Recognition of Camelback Jack, Radio Personality: Camelback Jack, 94.5 FM KOOL Radio, thanks veterans twice a day, five times per week. Donna Adams recommended that Camelback Jack be recognized by UAV at its November 1st meeting. Camelback Jack's radio station manager will be invited to attend. All were in agreement.

NEW BUSINESS

S.1084 Homes for Heroes Act 2007: Jesse Gersten reported that HR 3329, Homes for Heroes Act 2007, has been introduced in the U.S. Senate as S.1084 (July 2008) by Senator Obama with ten other Democratic Senator cosponsors. The Homes for Heroes Act 2007 is legislation that would provide housing assistance for very low income and formerly homeless veterans. It is critically important that more Republican Senators sign on as cosponsors, otherwise the legislation will appear to be partisan and experience death by pocket veto. Motion made by Jesse Gersten, seconded by Judy Hatch, that letters be sent from the UAV to Senators Kyl and McCain, urging them to sign on the bill as co-sponsors.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

- 1. The “America United: In Support of Our Troops” television special is scheduled for Sunday, September 7th on ABC from 9:00 – 11:00 p.m. (reported by Kathy Upchurch)**
- 2. Freedom Walk is Thursday, September 11th, downtown Phoenix, in commemoration of those who lost their lives on 9/11. Flags will fly at half staff on Thursday.**
- 3. State Fair: Mike Clemenson reported that the State Fair dates will be October 10 thru November 2nd. Sue Wudy needs volunteers to staff the booth, Sue's phone numbers are: 602.525.6209 and 602.277.4168.**
- 4. The 233rd U.S. Navy Birthday Ball is scheduled for Saturday, October 18th at the Tempe Mission Palms Hotel in Tempe, 6 p.m. Contact Carol Culbertson to select your dinner entrees: carolculbertson@earthlink.net or 602.943.7834.**
- 5. October 24th Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2008 Induction Ceremony, El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium, gates open at 10:30 a.m., luncheon at 11:30 a.m.**

Lunch tickets are now on sale at: www.avhof.org (reported by Jesse Gersten)

6. The Lioness documentary film about the direct combat roles of U.S. Military women in Iraq will be broadcast on Channel 8 PBS on November 13th.

7. Veterans Oasis Park in Chandler: Lew Bradley reported that there are 4 acres set aside for veterans memorials in Chandler, AZ.

8. Veterans Freedom Bridge in Lake Havasu City, AZ: Bo Bohach reported on progress being made by a very active committee in Lake Havasu City. No design has been selected yet.

9. Kathy Upchurch was re-elected National President of Gold Star Wives. Congratulations, Kathy!

CLOSING & ADJOURNMENT

A. The next UAV meeting will be held on Saturday, October 4, 2008, 10 a.m. - Noon, AZ State Veterans Home.

B. Closing prayer was given by Chaplain Bohach.

C. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. with a closing salute to the flag.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Culbertson

Secretary

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